Cycle of Service Learning

CYCLE OF SERVICE-LEARNING

Planning and Preparation • Action • Reflection • Recognition • Evaluation
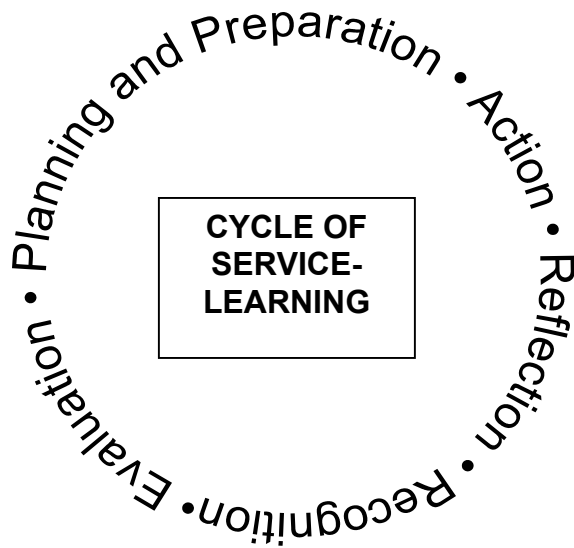

Although there are many models for Service-Learning projects, they all emphasize preparation, action, reflection, recognition and evaluation. These occur in no particular order, but happen many times during Service-Learning.

Each of the steps below should be accomplished with the students. Students should be leaders in the project. Teachers should be facilitators.

Planning and Preparation
- Make sure students understand Service-Learning, why they are involved, and why it is important.

- Assess the needs of the community through research, interviews, discussions, site visits, presentations, surveys, etc.

- Identify how the project meets curriculum standards.

- Identify the skills and knowledge each child will attain through Service-Learning.

- Invite interested leaders of the school, community, and others to become involved.

- Establish how you will evaluate and record learner outcomes.

- Identify civic and or social skills to be learned through Service-Learning

- When the project grows near, publicize the event in school and the community. (The press loves these kinds of "do good" stories and it gives kids a great reputation.)

Action
- Facilitate the development of the knowledge and skills needed by students to implement the project successfully.

- Implement the activity.

- Facilitate student planning, research, problem solving, and evaluation relative to the community needs.

Reflection
- Involve students in continuously making sense of their learning implementation through journal writing, drawing, discussion, or other means. Students should ask themselves
  What: What they are doing?
  So What: Whom is it affecting?
  Now What: What will be different because I have done this. What is my next step?

Evaluation
- Assess and involve students in demonstrating their acquisition of skills – academic and social.

- Assign grades to tasks through the use of rubrics.

- Be creative in evaluation through the use of poetry, presentation, hands on demonstration, etc.

Recognition/Celebration
- Engage students in publicizing their accomplishments through the school newspaper, internet, radio, or television.

- Celebrate learning with special privileges.